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Summary record of the 21st meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Ali ..... (Malaysia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 140: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Transfer of buildings to the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/62/548 and A/62/559)

1. **Mr. Yeo** (Officer-in-Charge, Peacekeeping Financing Division), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the transfer of buildings to the United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) at Brindisi (A/62/548), said that the use of UNLB premises was governed by a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and Italy, signed on 23 November 1994 and amended on 7 December 2001. It provided for rent-free use of premises at military installations in Italy to support peacekeeping, humanitarian and related operations.

2. The proposal before the Committee took into account a pledge by the Government of Italy to transfer to UNLB five buildings, under an arrangement already approved by the General Assembly in its decision 58/557 of 23 December 2003, as well as a further 6 buildings and 12 open areas. The space made available to the Logistics Base would be reconfigured to house UNLB headquarters, the Air Operations Unit, a storage area and asset deployment operations and the strategic deployment stocks.

3. The estimated renovation costs to be borne by the Organization were $3 million, covering 9 of the 11 buildings, and $0.6 million, covering the open areas. In addition, the Organization would be responsible for an annual recurring maintenance cost of some $370,000. Provisions for the renovation costs would be incorporated into the proposed budget for UNLB for 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, as a decision consistent with financial regulation 3.11 would be sought from the General Assembly to approve the transfer of the buildings and open areas concerned to UNLB.

4. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/559), said that the Committee was recommending General Assembly approval of the Secretary-General's proposal to accept the offer of the Government of Italy to transfer to UNLB 6 additional buildings and 12 areas of open space, following its previous offer to transfer 5 buildings to UNLB, approved by the General Assembly in 2003 by its decision 58/557. The Advisory Committee had noted that 2 of the 11 buildings would be used by the World Food Programme and that the additional space would allow the off-site warehouse in San Pancrazio to be closed.

5. The $3.6 million cost of renovating and adapting 9 buildings and 12 open areas would be included in the budget proposal for 2008/09. The total annual costs to be borne by the Organization for the maintenance of 11 buildings and the open spaces were estimated at $370,000. Once the existing memorandum of understanding between Italy and the United Nations on the use of premises at UNLB had been amended, renovation and alteration work could begin. That would occur during 2007/08. The Committee recommended that unutilized funds already appropriated for the current period should be used towards the renovation and maintenance of the additional buildings during 2007/08, with a corresponding reduction in the overall requirement of $3.6 million for 2008/09. Budget proposals for 2008/09 should also reflect savings from the closure of the San Pancrazio facility.

6. **Mr. Ramos** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the Government of Italy's contribution of 6 additional buildings and 12 open areas to UNLB. The transfer of the buildings and the conclusion of the memorandum of understanding would enable UNLB to optimize logistical support for peacekeeping missions and to operate in a more cost-effective manner. The European Union agreed with the comments and conclusions of the Advisory Committee.

Agenda item 128: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive and resumed substantive sessions of 2007 (A/62/7/Add.16 and A/62/515)

7. **Ms. Wong** (Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive and resumed substantive sessions of 2007 (A/62/515), said that, in line with established practice for reports on such revised

estimates, and as requested by the Advisory Committee, the report contained full cost estimates of additional requirements, including both conference and non-conference costs. The additional requirements of $238,300 for 2006-2007 could be fully absorbed within the appropriations approved for that biennium. Of the additional requirements of $14,205,700 for 2008-2009, it was proposed that $84,400 should be absorbed within the proposed provisions for that biennium.

8. After the report had been issued and considered by the Advisory Committee, the Third Committee had adopted draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.20/Rev.1. Implementation of paragraphs 14 and 15 of that draft resolution would alter the programme of work and resource requirements originally adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and communicated to the Economic and Social Council. She noted that the Advisory Committee had expressed no objection to the $14,121,300 of resource requirements, expressed as a charge against the contingency fund for the biennium 2008-2009, and that, on the basis of draft resolution A/C.3/62/L.20/Rev.1 and the statement of programme budget implications contained in document A/C.5/62/15, the additional resource requirements in question had been revised downwards to $10,807,950. The statement of programme budget implications in question replaced the related statement of the programme budget implications of Economic and Social Council decision 2007/279 contained in the report.

9. She also drew the Committee's attention to a number of further considerations set out in the report. First, a number of the revised estimates would be met from extrabudgetary resources. Second, as outlined in paragraph 17, the General Assembly was being requested to approve modifications of the programme narrative and outputs of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2008-2009, and incorporated into the related programme of work. Third, the General Assembly was also being requested to approve modifications of the programme narrative and outputs of section 23, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for 2008-2009.

10. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/7/Add.16), said that the Advisory Committee had noted from the report of the Secretary-General that the expenditure requirements for the biennium 2006-2007 arising as a result of decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive and resumed sessions of 2007 would be absorbed within the resources provided under the programme budget for that biennium. With regard to the biennium 2008-2009, the Advisory Committee had no objection to the approach proposed by the Secretary-General, namely that, of the total additional requirements of $14,205,700, an amount of $84,400 would be absorbed within the provisions in the proposed programme budget for that biennium and the balance of $14,121,300 would represent a charge against the contingency fund for 2008-2009, to be approved by the General Assembly at its sixty-second session. The adjustments consequent on the decisions of the Third Committee would be reflected in a subsequent report of the Advisory Committee.

11. **Mr. Hussain** (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, while his Group had no objection to the programme budget implications of the decisions of main bodies of the Organization in terms of substance, in terms of method it would prefer to consider them together as a cluster.

12. **The Chairman** said that he had noted the wishes of the Group of 77 and China.

13. **Mr. Sena** (Brazil) said that his delegation vigorously supported the strengthening of the United Nations Forum on Forests and would continue to express that support as consultations on the revised estimates proceeded.

14. **Mr. Abelian** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, with regard to the arrival of details of programme budget implications, the Fifth Committee should take account of the fact that some other Main Committees were still in session. Once the Bureau had clear indications of when that information could be expected, it would notify the Committee.

Agenda item 135: United Nations common system (*continued*) (A/C.5/62/L.6)

Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.6: United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission

15. *Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.6 was adopted.*

Agenda item 129: Programme planning (*continued*) (A/C.5/62/L.7)

Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.7: Programme planning

16. **Mr. Hillman** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation could not support the draft resolution in question because it did not adequately address the continued failure of the Committee on Programme and Coordination (CPC) to fulfil its original mandated tasks of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the Organization's programmes and activities. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had authorized the members of CPC to review the legislative mandates approved by Member States, with the goal of eliminating duplication and overlap and helping to ensure that resources were used to maximum advantage. While the United States had fully backed the establishment of CPC to serve as the principal intergovernmental body for coordinating the Organization's work, CPC was failing to perform that essential coordination function.

17. Programme planning and coordination remained essential to the success of the United Nations and CPC could make a more meaningful contribution to the work of the Organization if it reoriented its priorities in order to function as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had originally intended. His delegation commended Israel, which had chaired the forty-seventh session of CPC, for attempting to highlight the importance of that role, but as long as some remained unwilling to improve the operation of CPC, including its working methods and procedures, valuable resources would continue to be wasted and its relevance to be questioned. In the light of the foregoing, the United States delegation dissociated itself from the consensus on the draft resolution.

18. *Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.7 was adopted.*

19. **Mr. Yamada** (Japan), speaking in explanation of position, said that there was much room for improvement in the performance of CPC, particularly in the area of its policy coordination mandate. While it had no wish to break with the consensus on the draft resolution, his delegation was not fully satisfied with certain aspects of the text, particularly paragraph 15, and hoped that CPC would work to meet the expectations of Member States.

20. **Mr. Farooq** (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the useful and diligent work of CPC and the positive attitude of the negotiating partners during the consideration of the item. The Group of 77 and China had shown constructive flexibility, believing that a compromise between divergent views must be achieved. It therefore regretted that one delegation, which had actively participated in the negotiations, had dissociated itself from the consensus on the draft resolution and that another active participant, some of whose concerns had been taken into consideration in the draft resolution, was dissatisfied with the outcome. That situation was unfortunate, unfair and a breach of the good faith in which negotiations took place in the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 128: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Capital master plan (*continued*) (A/C.5/62/L.8)

Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.8: Capital master plan

21. *Draft resolution A/C.5/62/L.8 was adopted.*

22. **Mr. Alkhurainej** (Kuwait), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation supported the proposal of the Secretary-General on the accelerated strategy IV. Kuwait had been one of the few countries to pay its share of the capital master plan budget in full and on time and he urged other Member States to fulfil their financial obligations so that work on the capital master plan could be carried out according to plan and without delays which could burden the Member States with additional expenses. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would authorize the Secretary-General to provide temporary Headquarters premises promptly, so that the project could be completed in a single phase. The Secretary-General should ensure that project costs were restored to within the approved budget and include in his sixth annual progress report specific information on guaranteed-maximum-price contracts.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.